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immortality of the soul; but that this was a traditional belief of the Greek people, "one of the favorite themes of their old epic poetry, and the source of the worship of heroes and ancestors." He affirms that the philosophic speculations on this subject were only the reflections of maturity upon the ideas of its childhood,—only "the examination of the conscience of the Past." He finds descriptions of the "life to come" and the "invisible world" in the eleventh and twenty-fourth books of the *Odyssey*, in the poems of Prodicus of Phocæa, and in the "Works and Days" of Hesiod; and he insists that no error can be greater than the error which denies to this noblest branch of the Aryan race, so quick in its sentiment of human dignity, a share in the thought of a spiritual life as higher than the natural.

M. Ménard's theory is, that the philosophers did more to degrade than to exalt morality, in their speculations. He adduces Plato's theories upon love and upon family life in proof of this position. "When philosophy," he says, "had made of matter, of the feminine and passive element, the principle of evil in Nature, woman, degraded from the rank to which the popular religion and the primitive morality had assigned her, became an inferior being and the principle of evil in society." He vindicates the Helen of Homer as far superior to the abstract woman of the ethical writers, and finds the views of Hesiod, concerning marriage and the relation of the sexes, to be greatly in advance of those which obtained in the philosophic ages. He ventures even to question the popular opinion concerning the death of Socrates, and suggests that this crime, not less than the banishment of Aristides, was the natural manifestation of an honorable and watchful patriotism. "Philosophy," he says, "expiated in the person of Socrates its alliance with the enemies of order and of democracy."

The style of M. Ménard is pure, flowing, polished, and it often rises into eloquence. We hope soon to welcome some larger work from his pen.

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3. — *Researches into the Religions of Syria; or Sketches, Historical and Doctrinal, of its Religious Sects. Drawn from Original Sources.* By the Rev. JOHN WORTABET, M. D., Missionary of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland to Aleppo in Syria. London: James Nisbet & Co. 1860. Post 8vo. pp. 432.

MR. WORTABET had peculiar advantages in preparing a work on the Religions of Syria. He is a native of the land, has known its dialect from childhood, has belonged to more than one of the sects, and as a physician and missionary has been brought into personal relations with

most of the people that he describes. His book, though not always accurate, either in its estimate of numbers or in its statement of doctrines, is, on the whole, an excellent summary of the various Churches and Religions of Syria. We are surprised, however, that he has omitted to notice the Armenian Church, both of the orthodox and of the schismatic parties. From his catalogue, one might infer that there are no Armenians in Syria. They are certainly less numerous there than the other sects, and far less numerous than in other parts of the Turkish empire. But they are in Syria, nevertheless, a respectable body in numbers, and still more so in influence. They have three convents in Jerusalem, — one of them, the Convent of St. James, by far the largest and most beautiful monastic establishment in the Holy Land. They have a press. The members of their communion hold conspicuous public stations, are the consuls of foreign nations, and in point of education take a high rank. And they have quite as much claim to notice as the mere handful of Protestants, to which Mr. Wortabet devotes an elaborate closing chapter. His omitting to notice the Armenians seems quite unaccountable.

With this exception, the summary contained in the volume is complete, and the list of religions is trustworthy. Probably the Druses would not allow that the estimate of their number at 50,000 is correct, since they claim 100,000. They have unquestionably more than a quarter of the number of the Maronites. The estimate of the Moslem population at 750,000, one half of the whole, must be exaggerated, when we consider that in a large part of the land there are no Moslems. The author speaks of making his sketch of the Jews and Samaritans more complete, if another edition of the book should be called for. It is to be hoped that he may revise somewhat his table of relative numbers; which, if exact before, has certainly been rendered inaccurate by the recent massacres.

Mr. Wortabet divides his book into four parts. In the first, he treats of the Oriental Churches, the Greek, the Greek Catholic, and the Maronite, their history, their doctrines, and their customs, as he knows them from personal observation and study. In the second part, he treats of Mohammedanism and its Sects, the Wahabees, and Metawileh. In the third part, he treats of the Secret Religions, those of the Druses and the Nusairiyeh, which is his way of writing the name of the wild tribes of Northern Syria. His account of the Druses differs in several minor particulars from the account of De Sacy, in his great work, and his style of spelling the names is provokingly and needlessly peculiar. The chapter on the Nusairiyeh is too short, and of this curious people, so important in numbers, Mr. Wortabet evidently knows little from

personal intercourse. We hope soon to give in this Review a more detailed description of this northern tribe, as the late Rev. Samuel Lyde has presented their religion and their customs in his posthumous work. Part Fourth of Mr. Wortabet's volume treats of the Protestant Church in Syria, what it has done and what it hopes to do. Mr. Wortabet, of course, differs widely from M. Poujade in his estimate of the service wrought by the Protestant missionaries. He is a zealous convert. Yet he is moderate in his expectations, and states his case fairly. His book is a good one, so far as it goes.

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4. — *The Wits and Beaux of Society*. By GRACE and PHILIP WHARTON. With Illustrations from Drawings by H. K. Browne and James Godwin. Engraved by the Brothers Dalziel. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1861. 12mo. pp. 481.

THIS new volume of fashionable and frivolous life has a taking title, but is nevertheless very indifferently executed. None of the sketches are above mediocrity, and some of them, as, for instance, that of Beau Brummel, are positively silly. The compilers of the book lack equally skill in description and insight into character. They fail to apprehend the best points in the lives of their heroes, and their fragmentary and superficial notices leave in no instance a complete picture. The longest sketches, those of Horace Walpole and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, are the best; but these are not so good as many familiar sketches of Walpole and Sheridan, and add nothing whatever to our information concerning those famous wits and gentlemen. Where the subjects are comparatively new, as in the case of Beau Nash, Philip, Duke of Wharton, George Selwyn, and Bubb Doddington, we have nothing but platitudes. It requires more patience to get through this book of light gossip than through a volume of Patent Reports, or a treatise on the Law of Real Property. The stories that ought to be entertaining become tiresome, told so unskilfully.

The compilers evidently expect that their work will be popular, and will be received with the same favor as their previous work on the "Queens of Society." They find such characters as Nash, Scarron, and Doddington fascinating to themselves, and infer that they will be "interesting to the majority of English readers." They claim to bring forward authentic facts, to supply "table traits," and to make "life-like portraitures." But the verdict of most intelligent readers will be, we imagine, that, if such portraits are "life-like," the lives were not worth the record. Books like this have the merit neither of instruction nor of